

DECLARATION OF CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

WE WILL HONOR CHRIST

We at University of Northwestern – St. Paul and Northwestern Media have decided that whatever we do, for as long as we choose to be involved in this community, as students, teachers, administrators, on the board of trustees, as employees in the university or the media ministry, wherever we choose to live, our relationship to Jesus Christ and commitment to obey God's Word will be at the very center. This promise to God and to each other is what binds us together and sets us apart from the world. We believe that it is our duty, honor and delight to live under the Lordship of Christ, to study His Holy Scriptures, to reach all nations with the gospel of salvation through faith in Christ and teach them how to be disciples, to participate in the relentless and joyous pursuit of His truth, and we believe it is our privilege and responsibility to live in community with other believers who feel the same.

WE WILL STRIVE FOR CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

We, as members of Northwestern's Christ-centered community, will strive to love our God and each other as He loves us (Matt. 22:37–39): with kindness, mercy, faithfulness, gentleness, grace, patience and perseverance (Gal. 5:22, 23; Jas. 1:4). We will love what is good and abhor what is evil (Rom. 12:9). We will seek righteousness and justice. We are willing to be as servants to each other. We will encourage and support each other (Heb. 10:24). We value the passionate exchange of ideas, but we will strive to resolve conflicts with humility, kindness, mutual respect and Christ-like love (Col. 3:13, 14). We are to be faithful witnesses to the gospel (1 Pet. 3:15), people of integrity, practicing good works and self-control, with lives filled with prayer, joy and thanksgiving (1 Thess. 5:15–22).

AS EMPLOYEES, WE WILL SEEK CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

As employees of Northwestern, we agree to put Jesus Christ at the center of our lives and work. We will strive to live and work in Christ-like community, dedicated to each other and our God, for the betterment of His Kingdom, His people and Northwestern. We will respect each other: our peers, our students, our listeners, those to whom we answer and those who answer to us (1 Pet. 2:17), knowing that Christ has brought us together to further His plan and for His glory. We will value individuality and work for commonality (Phil. 2:2). We will strive to protect the weakest members of our community (Psa. 41:1). We voluntarily abstain from certain activities that might draw us or others away from God (1 Cor. 8:9–13; Gal. 5:19–21), particularly on behalf of those students and listeners who are new to their freedom and have placed themselves in our environment or in our care.

AS LEADERS, WE WILL SEEK CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

As leaders in the Northwestern community, whether serving as a manager, director, department head, vice president, senior leadership team member, president or board member, we will be prayerful in our decisions, receptive to the needs of the community, dedicated to the present and future welfare of Northwestern. We will be good stewards of the responsibilities that have been temporarily placed in our care, seek God's wisdom with humility and a servant heart, and pursue excellence with compassion and Christ-like love (Col. 3:12).

AS FACULTY MEMBERS, WE WILL SEEK CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

As faculty members, we dedicate ourselves to our students and to each other in the community for the glory of God and the relentless and joyous pursuit of His truth. We will strive for excellence as teachers and as scholars. We will be good stewards of the responsibilities of our positions, building up and encouraging those around us (1 Thess. 5:11), and we will be faithful mentors and instructors to the students whom God has temporarily entrusted to our care.

AS STUDENTS, WE WILL SEEK CHRIST-CENTERED COMMUNITY

As students at University of Northwestern, we will strive to create an atmosphere of Christ-centered community. We will put our relationship to Jesus Christ at the center of our lives and our studies (Gal.

2:20). As students, we agree to watch out for each other, support each other, encourage each other, push ourselves and each other to work our hardest, to live with integrity, to pursue God's truth, to do our very best for the benefit of ourselves and other students, the benefit of University of Northwestern, its faculty and staff, and for the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (Col. 3:17). In our language and our actions, we will honor and respect those in leadership positions. We will consider the weaknesses of others as important as our own freedoms or personal strengths for the greater good (Rom. 14:19–21), acknowledging that each student comes to Northwestern from a different place in his or her spiritual journey. We agree to protect the weaker members of the community, even ourselves. We will depend on each other and be dependable. We understand that many rules and guidelines at University of Northwestern, instituted and followed by the whole community for the safety and benefit of all, were created to instruct and steer us into right choices, foster true Christ-centered community during our years here, and teach us how to spread Christ-centered community to others.

NORTHWESTERN WILL BE SET APART

We pledge to set ourselves apart as a community of believers for the glory of God. We will hold ourselves accountable to each other, so that, with the sustaining support of the Holy Spirit, we will stand together against the dangers of our fallen world and our own sinful impulses.

We stand together against all that the Bible clearly condemns: greed and materialism, dishonesty (plagiarism included), prejudice, social injustice, impurity and debauchery, casual and disrespectful use of the name of the Lord, drunkenness, violent behavior, occult practices, hatred, jealousy, pride and discord, immodesty in dress or behavior, murder/homicide (including abortion), slander, gossip, gluttony, vulgar or obscene language and any activities that are illegal (Col. 3:5–11; Gal. 5: 19–21; 1 Cor. 6:9–10).

We, as members of Northwestern's Christ-centered community, believing the Gospel has power to reconcile repentant sinners to God and to one another (2 Cor. 5:16-20; Eph. 2:13-22), will refrain from racism, prejudice, and social injustices (Rom. 10:12; Heb. 12:14; James 1:27). As followers of Christ, we condemn oppression which can manifest itself in individuals and systems (Exodus 1:11-14; Acts 6:1-7; James 5:1-6). We believe that being a gospel-centered people requires us to act with justice and mercy (Micah 6:8; Mt. 23:23; Lk. 10:33-37), that God made us all unique and in His image (Gen. 1:26-27; Ps. 139:14; James 3:9), and it is His will that Christians live together in harmony (Jn. 17:23; 1 Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:3). Therefore, as members of the Northwestern community, and in submission to the Holy Spirit, we commit to treating every person without partiality (Acts 10:34; James 2:9), humbly working toward loving all people with the genuine love of Christ (Mt. 22:39; Gal. 6:10), and doing so for His glory (1 Cor. 10:31) and for the good of all (Rom. 12:18; Gal. 6:10).

We support the sanctity of marriage (Ephesians 5, Hebrews 13:4). We will not adopt society's casual acceptance of divorce and will encourage members of the Northwestern community to seek marital reconciliation whenever possible. We also affirm the role of the local church and their denominational affiliations, consistent with the whole of our Declaration of Christian Community, in supporting their members in marriage reconciliation processes and in matters related to divorce.

We define marriage as being a covenant between one man and one woman (Gen. 2:21-24; Matt. 19:4-5). We believe in honoring the holy sexual union within the context of that covenant (Hebrews 13:4). Believing that God redeems and restores through life in Christ, we walk alongside those that are seeking to overcome sexual sin (Romans 6-8; Galatians 6:2). As followers of Christ, we turn from sexual immorality in its many forms including but not limited to: pornography, pre-marital sexual relations, adultery, and same sex romantic intimacy and/or sexual relations. We come alongside those experiencing same sex attractions who choose to honor Christ by not pursuing those attractions, just as we come alongside all individuals who seek to live in purity before the Lord (Col. 3:5; Gal. 5:19-21; Rom. 1:21-27; 1 Cor. 6:9-10).

We believe we are created by God in His image as two distinct sexes: male and female (Gen. 1:26-28; Matt. 19:4-5). We believe that each person glorifies God and affirms His infinite holiness and wisdom by

living in alignment with his or her birth sex. While we acknowledge there may be confusion and brokenness for some individuals in this area, we do not affirm or support transgender identity or expression. Instead, we place our faith and trust in God's redemptive plan.

We also stand together to better carry each other's burdens (Rom. 14:19–21). We understand that sometimes, for the cause of a stronger, safer society and workplace and the gentle support of each other, we are called to exercise our freedom to abstain from activities that might cause others to fall away.

We stand together to protect our community from any illegal or dangerously addictive substances, knowing they can destroy the lives of all who become entangled with them. The sale, possession, and use of non-medicinal drugs and the recreational use and abuse of over-the-counter and pharmaceutical drugs are strictly prohibited.

We do not care to participate in society's casual acceptance of gambling. Any games of chance where money or valuables are risked on the outcome will not be promoted and should be avoided by all members.

The Bible clearly demonstrates that throughout the cultures of the Old and New Testaments, the moderate use of alcohol is accepted and prevalent (e.g. 1 Tim. 5:23; Isa. 55:1). In our contemporary American culture, however, the abuse of alcohol has been the cause of tremendous heartache and tragedy, particularly in the hands of the young, and we will stand together as a community to make sure that the use of alcohol will not be promoted, nor its abuse tolerated at Northwestern (cf. Prov. 23:20; Eph. 5:18).

Likewise, Northwestern will not participate in society's casual acceptance of tobacco, a substance whose highly addictive qualities and life-threatening potential have been well documented. Although the Bible does not deal directly with the use of tobacco, the Lord clearly expects His children to value their own lives as well as protect the lives of others (cf. Gen. 9:6; John 15:13).

We agree and accept that Northwestern and all its functions will be alcohol and tobacco free. This includes on or around all campus properties, owned or leased, all university vehicles, whether on or off campus and all Northwestern events, wherever they may be held.

As members of the Northwestern community who are not traditional undergraduates, we will refrain from the consumption of any tobacco products or alcoholic beverages at any Northwestern-related event or gathering, formal or informal, and/or at any public or private setting in which any traditional undergraduate members are or are likely to be present.

If we are traditional undergraduate students, we will refrain from the consumption of alcoholic beverages and tobacco products.

We agree to abide by the student and employee handbooks for specific guidelines, information on special provisions (for example, the sacramental use of wine) and all related disciplinary procedures.

WE WILL EXERCISE RESPONSIBLE FREEDOM

As faithful followers of Christ and as members of Northwestern, we will exercise our God-given freedoms responsibly, with thoughtful discretion. In all matters of entertainment and culture, we will keep as a guide the words of Philippians 4:8: "Finally, Brothers, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

We agree not to participate in any kind of entertainment that could be considered immodest, prurient, or harmfully violent (cf. Gal. 5:19-23). We will seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and hold each other accountable (Matt. 18:15–19) when participating in all forms of amusements and entertainment, such as television, music, video, video games, movies, Internet, concerts and dancing.

A COMMUNITY WITHOUT BORDERS

We seek a joyous and enriching community, set apart for the glory of God, inhabited by people who treat each other with Christ-like love, humility and kindness, working together for the benefit of Northwestern in the pursuit of God's truth and the spread of His gospel.

As long as I enjoy the privilege of membership, wherever I am in the world, I will strive to represent my community with integrity. I will remember that I am, above all, an ambassador of Christ and His Kingdom. Officially, I will consider myself a member of the University of Northwestern – St. Paul and/or Northwestern Media community for the entire length of my employment, my leadership role, and/or my association as a student.

THIS IS OUR COVENANT

This document is a formal statement of individual commitment and shared purpose. I understand that, if I am accepted into or employed by University of Northwestern or Northwestern Media, I will be a productive member of the Northwestern community and I will choose to live by the principles and expectations contained in this Declaration of Christian Community. I also understand that failure to live within these guidelines can result in disciplinary action up to and including dismissal.

I want to be a member of this Christ-centered community. I will follow these guidelines with integrity, and I want to experience the privileges and benefits that, by God's grace, each community member hopes and expects to enjoy.

Signature _____

Date _____

Effective: June 1, 2007
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Responsible University Officer: Nina Barnes, Vice President for Student Life and Human Resources
Policy Owner: Human Resources